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## PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT COVER SHEET

This is a request for filing a PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT under 37 CFR 1.53 (c).

INVENTOR(S)					
Given Name (first and middle [if any])	Family Name or Surname	Residence (City and either State or Foreign Country)			
Billy	PITTARD	Los Angeles, California			
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional inventors are being named on the _____ separately numbered sheets attached hereto					
TITLE OF THE INVENTION (280 characters max)					
SIMPLIFIED CONTROL SYSTEM FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA					
CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS					
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer Number <b>000028983</b>					
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<input type="checkbox"/> Firm or Individual Name REED SMITH					
Address 1901 Avenue of the Stars					
Address Suite 700					
City Los Angeles		State CA	ZIP 90067		
Country USA		Telephone 310 734-5200	Fax 310 743-5299		
ENCLOSED APPLICATION PARTS (check all that apply)					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specification Number of Pages 14		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small Entity Statement			
<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s) Number of Sheets		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) return postcard Express Mail Certificate			
METHOD OF PAYMENT OF FILING FEES FOR THIS PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT (check one)					
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Respectfully submitted,

SIGNATURE

*Stefan J. Kirchanski*  
Stefan J. Kirchanski

TYPED or PRINTED NAME

310 734-5403

TELEPHONE

Date 10/24/03

REGISTRATION NO.  
(if appropriate)

36,568

Docket Number:

356408.00400

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22151 U.S. PTO  
60/541466



020204



22783 U.S. PTO

PATENT

Attorney Docket No: 356408.00400

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

Billy PITTARD

Serial No: Not Assigned

Filed: February 2, 2004

For: SIMPLIFIED CONTROL SYSTEM FOR  
ELECTRONIC MEDIA

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING VIA U.S. EXPRESS MAIL

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- ☐ Preliminary Amendment
- ☒ Assertion of Small Entity Status under 37 CFR 1.27
- ☐ Request And Certification Under 35 U.S.C. 122(b)(2)(B)(i) for non-publication
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REED SMITH LLP  
1901 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 700  
Los Angeles, CA 90067  
Phone: (310) 734-5200  
Fax: (310) 734-5299

Stefan Kirchanski

Name of person mailing papers

  
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# ReedSmith

Stefan J. Kirchanski  
Direct Phone: 310.734.5403  
Email: skirchanski@reedsmith.com

1901 Avenue of the Stars  
Suite 700  
Los Angeles, CA 90067  
310.734.5200  
Fax 310.734.5299

February 2, 2004

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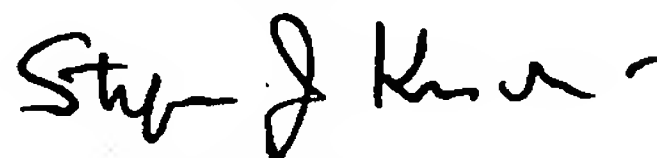
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P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313

Re: ASSERTION OF SMALL ENTITY STATUS  
New U.S. Provisional Patent Application  
Inventor(s) : Billy PITTARD  
SIMPLIFIED CONTROL SYSTEM FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA  
Filed : February 2, 2004  
Attorney Docket No. : 356408.00400

Dear Sir or Madam:

The undersigned attorney hereby asserts that the Patent Application entitled "SIMPLIFIED CONTROL SYSTEM FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA" by Billy PITTARD filed on February 2, 2004 is entitled to Small Entity Status. The required inquiry to establish Small Entity (§ 1.27(a)) status has been made.

Very truly yours,



Stefan J. Kirchanski

SJK/tbm

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### **Simplified Control System for Electronic Media**

The present invention is a greatly improved user control system that utilizes an inventive simplified interactive media protocol (**SIMP**). The resulting system is so intuitive that even toddlers are able to interactively control specially-prepared media via a special remote control.

Control systems for electronic media devices have become increasingly complex. Feeling incompetent, users have become resigned to suffer with the complex, barely useable controls for those devices. These complex controls are often characterized by cursor-based navigation, and by large numbers of buttons on remote controls.

Electronic media systems usually employ a system of cursor-accessed on-screen controls accessed by remote controls. These devices respond to users' actions by implementing software that is stored in the device along with visual, audio, and additional software that is stored either in the device or storage media such as DVD, CD-ROM, videotape, computer hard drive, or other storage media. The software operates on the microprocessors of the device so that the process of viewing and interacting with visual and audio components actually represents the user manipulating a computer program wherein functions of the program retrieve and play back appropriate modules of prerecorded video and/or audio data from the storage medium.

The present invention utilizes a simplified user interface protocol between a user input device (such as a remote control) and a machine display showing on-screen choices. This invention enables a user to make direct selections of items on the screen by activating inputs on the user input device wherein the inputs show a clear visual relation to the on-screen choices. The invention includes a visual correlation between selectable icons on the screen and inputs (buttons, etc.) on the remote control (input device). The visual correlation is generally not based on written language and does not require reading on the part of the user.

The invention applies to any kind of screen-based medium or device that can be controlled via a remote control. For the purpose of this application, a "remote control" is defined as any device that is used to select or control on-screen user-selectable functions or choices without requiring reading by the user. Thus, a keyboard and traditional menu-driven interface do not fall within the present invention because the operation of such an input device involves reliance on written language and reading on the part of the user.

This invention is presented in this document in terms of a DVD (**D**igital **V**ersatile **D**isc) because the DVD is currently a dominant form of electronic media.

It will be understood that the invention is applicable to all electronic media and electronic devices, including DVD.

Prior to SIMP, a high level of DVD interactivity has not been practical because of two factors:

- Different models of DVD players execute standard DVD remote control commands differently. DVD interaction design has remained very limited because of this variability of user experience on different players. There *is* a globally accepted set of specifications for programming DVDs, but there is *not* a globally accepted set of standards for DVD remote control functions. This shortcoming is a serious impediment to positive user experience; however, this shortcoming has not been widely recognized.
- The large number of buttons on standard DVD remote controls tends to intimidate and confuse users. Some DVD remote controls have over 50 buttons.

Most DVD functionality can actually be controlled with a lot fewer buttons than exist on most DVD remote controls. Most of the buttons on standard remotes are for rarely-used functions other than navigation or choice. One embodiment of the SIMP DVD remote control includes a minimum number buttons, each with functionality programmed for intuitive functionality and ease of use.

The SIMP protocol also includes specifications that assure the buttons on the SIMP remote will perform in the same way on all DVD players. Thus creating a consistent and satisfying user experience.

The invention allows robustly interactive DVD programs to be created because of two key components:

- A set of rules for programming and structuring DVD content
- A special SIMP remote control

This SIMP system includes four components:

- 1) A specially-designed remote control having a limited set of buttons (described below);
- 2) A set of rules and specifications describing the DVD functionality that is activated by the buttons, specifications for arranging content in a DVD title, and a description of the intended interactive user experience;

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- 3) Specifications for an onscreen navigational interface that is linked to the remote control buttons
- 4) A series of DVD titles providing video and audio content arranged and programmed according to 2) and 3) whereby the user input to the DVD is provided through 1) without the need to read.

SIMP DVDs and SIMP Remote Controls work with existing DVD players therefore users need only acquire a new specialized remote control and specially prepared DVD programs to experience the advantages of the inventive system.

### **The remote control**

The inventive SIMP DVD remote control is envisioned as having seven to nine buttons. While it is believed that this will prove to be an optimal number of buttons, a smaller or larger number of buttons can be used without altering the basic invention. One embodiment of the remote control includes four Direct Select buttons (described below).

In addition, there may be a "home" button, a "back" button, a "forward" button, and a "repeat" button to implement a simple system of moving backward and forward through the recorded information.

Any other buttons necessary for programming the remote or the system are hidden—as in a closed compartment.

### **Direct-Select Navigational Interface**

The SIMP navigational interface employs a visual correspondence between buttons on the remote control and graphics adjacent to selectable items on the screen. The SIMP remote control includes a small number of Direct-Select buttons which correspond to visually related graphics on the screen. The current design uses four Direct-Select buttons but that number may vary. The Direct-Select on-screen graphics are each placed adjacent to selectable items. The user makes selections by pressing the single button on the remote that corresponds to the appropriate item on the screen. The visual correspondence does not rely on written language and reading so the invention is useable by those who cannot read or cannot read the language used in the particular DVD title. This is an advantage over the normal selection process in which the user must first navigate a cursor to the desired item (normally discerned by reading a written label) on the screen and then press another button to activate that selection. SIMP provides a direct and intuitive way for the user to make choices on the screen, and allows the user to click fewer buttons fewer times to activate selections. In addition, the reduced number of button pushes in the SIMP system means the invention is also ideal for users with impaired dexterity and other handicaps.

The SIMP system of direct selection means that users need only press one button one time to make a selection, however selecting and activating an item in a *standard* DVD requires several commands be made using two or more different buttons. For example, the user may need to move the cursor up or down with one button and to the right or left with another button to arrive at the desired selection, and finally push a third button to activate the selection. The up/down/right/left buttons may need to be clicked a number of times as well. In contrast, SIMP requires one click of a single button to achieve the same result.

The DVD is programmed so that when one of the Direct-Select buttons is pressed, a specified function is executed. This function could be any of a variety of programmable DVD functions.

### **Advantages of SIMP Improved Interface for Interactive Media**

The interface design is so simple and intuitive that children as young as two and a half years old can use it. The simplicity of the interface allows the user to intuitively understand how to interact with the DVD without fumbling to find the right buttons or requiring complex instruction. The simplified, consistently performing interface is an advantage to all users including adults, and is readily adaptable to the disabled, to seniors or to anyone who is troubled by the complexity of the usual electronic media interface.

A simple example of using this invention's Direct Select buttons is choosing a movie scene from a DVD menu. SIMP allows several scenes to be available on one screen. By selecting the button visually congruent with the graphic adjacent the desired scene, the scene will begin to play automatically.

An additional benefit of SIMP is that it allows for interactive media experiences to be delivered in a completely contained and safe environment, as opposed to the dangers that exist with the Internet and broadcast/cable television.

### **More Detail on the Direct-Select Interface**

The graphics of the buttons on the screen resemble the buttons on the remote. In one embodiment, the buttons are colored ellipses, each a different color. There can also be a surround around the buttons on the remote, and there may be a corresponding outline around the buttons on the screen. The surround/outline may be a neutral color different from the color of the buttons. This will allow the colored buttons to remain highly discernable even if they happen to be placed on a background area of the same color as the button.

The Direct Select buttons may be arranged in a row on the remote so that there is no unintended meaning to their relative positions.

The interface uses a visual correlation between buttons on the remote and icons on the screen, whether that is done with color, shape, symbols, numbers, letters, relative positioning, or any other means.

### **Home, Back, Next and Repeat Buttons**

The remote control may include general navigation buttons: "home," "back," "next" and "repeat."

To make the navigational controls easy for users to understand, SIMP uses a pages-in-a-book metaphor. Turn the page "back," or turn to the "next" page, or "repeat" the current page by using the "back," "next," and "repeat" buttons.

Outside of this invention, the apparently simple functions of moving backward and forward through the content, and even trying to return to the menu, vary significantly between different models of DVD players. SIMP solves this problem and provides a consistent navigational experience regardless of the model of DVD player.

SIMP includes an improved method for advancing or backing up through content sections. This is accomplished with specially programmed "back," "forward," "repeat," and "home" buttons on the remote control that function consistently regardless of the model of the DVD player. Again, this is possible because of the combination of SIMP programming rules combined with the SIMP special remote control.

A press of the "home" button will return the user to the most recent menu. A second press will take the user back one more level (if there is a series of levels), until the user gets to the main menu of the disc. This is an improvement over the function of the "menu" button on a standard remote control because of the lack of uniform programming from one DVD player and its remote to the next.

The "back" and "forward" buttons cause the equivalent of turning the pages of a book. The SIMP protocol specifies that content on the DVD is arranged in sequence so that the user can move forward or backward section-by-section within a given area of the DVD content. The "forward" button advances to the beginning of the next section. The "back" button causes the player to jump to the beginning of the previous section. This is a breakthrough feature because with standard remote controls the "back" button functions differently on different DVD players.

The "repeat" button takes the user to the beginning of the section the user is currently viewing.

SIMP's combination of a special remote control tied to a strict set of DVD programming rules creates a reliably consistent navigation experience for users regardless of the DVD or the DVD player.

## **DVD Programming Specifications**

All of the DVD programming used by the invention conforms to official DVD specifications, however, the invention provides a set of rules for how that programming is to be implemented. This assures that user experience remains consistent between different DVDs and different DVD players. The SIMP protocol assures that the functionality of the DVD disc performs correctly under the control of the SIMP remote control.

The "back" button causes the DVD player to go to the beginning of the prior section. If a user is viewing a menu page, the back button takes the user back one level toward the main menu. If the user is viewing the main menu, the back button is inactive.

The "forward" button takes the user to the beginning of the next section. If the user is viewing a menu page, the forward button is inactive.

The "repeat" button takes the user to the beginning of the currently viewed section.

The Direct Select buttons always cause auto-actions. Examples of auto-actions include jumping to another place in the DVD, superimposing a graphic, or changing a superimposed graphic.

The "home" button will take the user to the menu of the current section. If the user is already viewing a menu page, pressing the home button takes the user back one level toward the main menu. If the user is viewing the main menu, the home button is inactive.

According to the rules of the present invention each menu can have a number of selections equal to the number of Direct-Select buttons on the remote. These selections are accessed by the Direct Select buttons on the remote. (As will be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art the exact number of Direct Select buttons could be changed without affecting the invention except that the maximum number of menu selections should correspond to the number of Direct Select buttons.)

Similarly, any place in the DVD can have a number of selections up to or equal to the number of Direct-Select buttons on the remote.

According to the rules, the DVD can contain no normal up, down, right, left navigation because there are no buttons for those functions on the inventive remote control.

The DVD can contain no normal "enter" functions because there is no "enter" button.

The content on the DVD is arranged in a structure defined by the DVD Programming Specifications so that the user can jump forward or backward section-by-section within a given area of the DVD content.

The present invention provides a simplified interface based on a subset of the 36 available DVD buttons. The precise number of buttons used can be varied, but one embodiment uses the following arrangement:

Button #1 has been assigned the "back" function.

Button #2 has been assigned the "home" function.

Button #3 has been assigned the "forward" function.

Button #4 has been assigned the "red Direct Select" function.

Button #5 has been assigned the "green Direct Select" function.

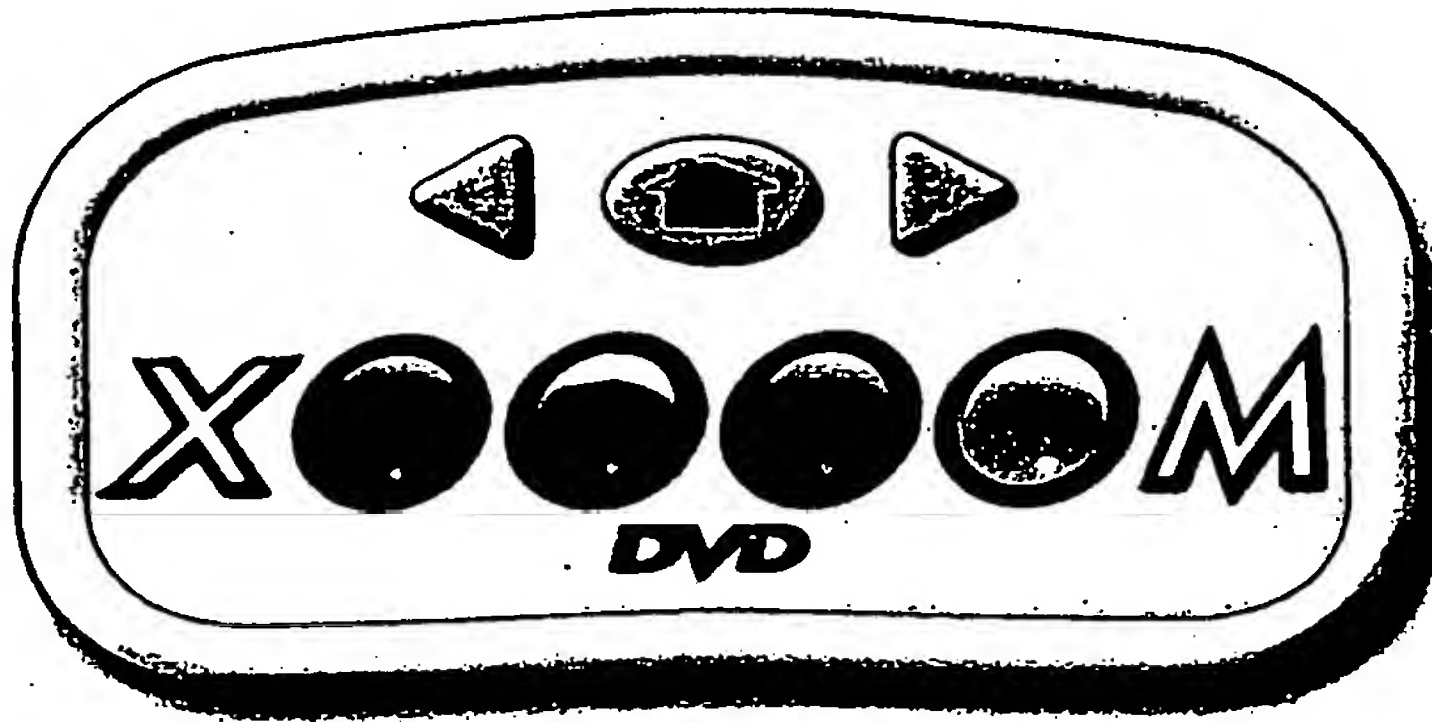
Button #6 has been assigned the "blue Direct Select" function.

Button #7 has been assigned the "yellow Direct Select" function.

Button #8 has been assigned the "repeat" function. (This button will be the default selection throughout the DVD.)

**A Sample Design for the Remote Control:**

The following is a sample prototype illustration of a SIMP remote control.



The top row of buttons includes "back," "home," and "next." The bottom row includes four Direct-Select buttons. This row may also include a "repeat" button.

Notice the visual similarity between the Direct-Select buttons on the remote and the on-screen icons in the following sample scenarios.

## **Sample DVD Scenarios Implementing the Inventive System**

Following are sample scenarios that might occur in an actual DVD produced to use the invention. These examples use Direct-Select buttons that are colored and shaped to look like the corresponding buttons on the remote control. As discussed previously, actual buttons may have distinct shapes as well as distinct colors.

### **Scenario #1:**

Sample navigational main menu for a child's DVD implementing the inventive system. DVD programming notes are indicated with red text.



This menu would be the Root menu of Video Title Set (VTS) 1, Program Chain (PGC) 1

The real program might include images rather than printed words of the various activities adjacent the graphic representations of the buttons. That is, "The garden" could show an image of a colorful garden, and "Meet the Animals" could show images of the animals adjacent the button image.

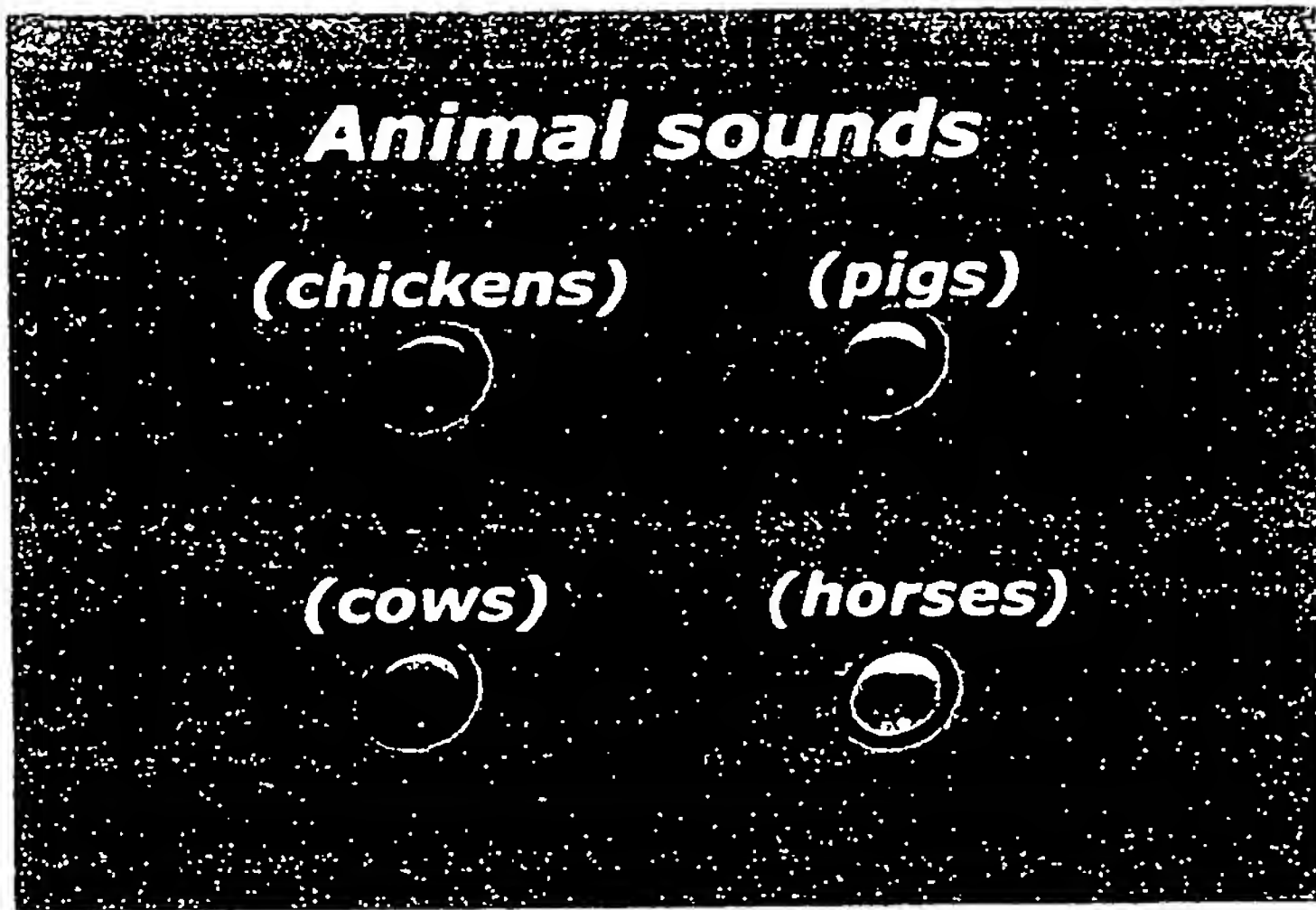
This is the main menu of the DVD.

- Back button is inactive Bttn#1 – command is LinkTopC
- Home button is inactive Bttn#2 – command is LinkTopC
- Forward button is inactive Bttn#3 – command is LinkTopC
- Red Button, "Meet the animals" links to a series of menus that allow viewers to choose which animals they would like to "meet." Bttn#4 – command is LinkPGCN 2

- Green button, "Animal sounds" links to the activity menu as described below. Bttn#5 – command is LinkPGCN 3
- Blue button, "Farm Chores" links to an activities menu that allows viewers to choose from farm-related activities such as feeding the animals, counting animals, and finding eggs. Bttn#5 – command is LinkPGCN 4
- Yellow button, "The Garden" links to an activities menu allows viewers to choose from garden-related activities. Bttn#6 – command is LinkPGCN 5
- Back button is inactive Bttn#1 – command is LinkTopC
- Home button is inactive Bttn#2 – command is LinkTopC
- Forward button is inactive Bttn#3 – command is LinkTopC

**Sc nari #2:**

Sample activity menu for a child's DVD implementing the inventive system also showing an alternative arrangement of the Direct-Select icons.



This menu would be a "no\_ID" menu in VTS 1 , PGC #2

The real program might include images of the various animals rather than the words.

- Red button (chickens) links to a video clip of chickens clucking, etc. Btn#4 – command is JumpVTS\_TT 1 (to VTS 1 Title #1)
- Green button (pigs) links to a video clip of pigs grunting. Btn#5 – command is JumpVTS\_TT 2 (to VTS 1 Title #2)
- Blue button (cows) links to a video clip of cattle mooing. Btn#6 – command is JumpVTS\_TT 3 (to VTS 1 Title #3)
- Yellow button (horses) links to a video clip of horses whinnying. Btn#7 – command is JumpVTS\_TT 4 (to VTS 1 Title #4)
- Back button links to main menu. Btn#1 – command is Mov GPRM10 0 LinkPGCN 1
- Forward button links to farm chores menu. Btn#2 – command is LinkPGCN 3
- Home button links to main menu. Btn#3 – command is Mov GPRM10 0 LinkPGCN 1

**VTS 1 Menu space**

**PGC # 1**

*PreComands:*

Comp GPRM10 == 2 LinkPGCN 2

Comp GPRM10 == 3 LinkPGCN 2

*PostComands:*

none

**PGC # 2**

*PreComands:*

none

*PostComands:*

none

**PGC # 3**

*PreComands:*

none

*PostComands:*

none

**VTS 1 Title space**

**Title # 1**

*PreComands:*

Mov GPRM10 2

*PostComands:*

CallRootMenu 1 1

**Title # 2**

*PreComands:*

Mov GPRM10 2

*PostComands:*

CallRootMenu 1 1

**Title # 3**

*PreComands:*

Mov GPRM10 2

*PostComands:*

CallRootMenu 1 1

**Title # 4**

*PreComands:*

Mov GPRM10 2

*PostComands:*

CallRootMenu 1 1

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## **Applications Beyond DVD**

The invention applies to any kind of screen-based medium or device that can be controlled via a remote control. For the purpose of this application, a "remote control" includes any device that is used to control on-screen user-selectable functions or choices.

Examples of applications:

- Computers and computer programs
- Internet browsing and Website interaction
- DVD programs
- Television sets
- Cable TV set top boxes
- Satellite TV set top boxes
- Video games devices
- VCRs
- PVRs (personal video recorders)
- Audio systems with on-screen program controls
- Home automation systems

## **Computer and Website Interaction with the SIMP Control System**

Computer programs, the Internet and Websites include a level of complexity that can be challenging for many people. These things are generally considered too complex for small children and many adults. Additionally, access to the whole Internet is generally considered to be dangerous for children due to inappropriate content on the Internet and potential abuse by unscrupulous individuals.

Applying the SIMP control system concepts of this invention makes it possible to create safe and simple computer and Internet experiences that would be appropriate for small children. This is accomplished through two main components:

- 1) Computer software programs and Websites that are built according to the rules set forth for this invention
- 2) A simplified remote control to replace the standard keyboard and mouse used with most computers

There is no cursor involved as is generally used with making selections on computer programs and websites. Users make Direct-Selections from the screen as described earlier in this document.

Websites need only to be built to follow the same guidelines as described with the detailed DVD application described above.

The remote control can be "connected" to the computer in any of the standard ways that keyboards are connected, either by wires or wirelessly. The remote control is in fact a simplified keyboard with a minimal number of keys.

By disconnecting the standard keyboard and mouse from the computer, users would not be able to navigate beyond the limits of a website or computer programs designed to this set of specifications. Thus the simplified control system protects users from materials they should not have access to. This is ideal for parental control within the home and for control within libraries and educational settings. This allows complete access to sanctioned educational material while making it impossible for the students to access other "extracurricular" sites.

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

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Date of mailing (day/month/year) 29 March 2005 (29.03.2005)	
Applicant's or agent's file reference 2201691-WO0	IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION
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International publication date (day/month/year)	Priority date (day/month/year) 02 February 2004 (02.02.2004)
Applicant COMCHOICE CORP. et al	

1. By means of this Form, which replaces any previously issued notification concerning submission or transmittal of priority documents, the applicant is hereby notified of the date of receipt by the International Bureau of the priority document(s) relating to all earlier application(s) whose priority is claimed. Unless otherwise indicated by the letters "NR", in the right-hand column or by an asterisk appearing next to a date of receipt, the priority document concerned was submitted or transmitted to the International Bureau in compliance with Rule 17.1(a) or (b).
2. (If applicable) The letters "NR" appearing in the right-hand column denote a priority document which, on the date of mailing of this Form, had not yet been received by the International Bureau under Rule 17.1(a) or (b). Where, under Rule 17.1(a), the priority document must be submitted by the applicant to the receiving Office or the International Bureau, but the applicant fails to submit the priority document within the applicable time limit under that Rule, the attention of the applicant is directed to Rule 17.1(c) which provides that no designated Office may disregard the priority claim concerned before giving the applicant an opportunity, upon entry into the national phase, to furnish the priority document within a time limit which is reasonable under the circumstances.
3. (If applicable) An asterisk (\*) appearing next to a date of receipt, in the right-hand column, denotes a priority document submitted or transmitted to the International Bureau but not in compliance with Rule 17.1(a) or (b) (the priority document was received after the time limit prescribed in Rule 17.1(a) or the request to prepare and transmit the priority document was submitted to the receiving Office after the applicable time limit under Rule 17.1(b)). Even though the priority document was not furnished in compliance with Rule 17.1(a) or (b), the International Bureau will nevertheless transmit a copy of the document to the designated Offices, for their consideration. In case such a copy is not accepted by the designated Office as the priority document, Rule 17.1(c) provides that no designated Office may disregard the priority claim concerned before giving the applicant an opportunity, upon entry into the national phase, to furnish the priority document within a time limit which is reasonable under the circumstances.

<u>Priority date</u>	<u>Priority application No.</u>	<u>Country or regional Office or PCT receiving Office</u>	<u>Date of receipt of priority document</u>
02 February 2004 (02.02.2004)	60/541,466	US	21 February 2005 (21.02.2005)

The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland  Facsimile No. +41 22 740 14 35	Authorized officer  Da-Costa Luis  Facsimile No. +41 22 338 89 65 Telephone No. +41 22 338 8221
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